

The Children's Paper

April

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THE CHILDREN'S PAPER

APRIL 1924

THOMAS NELSON AND SONS, LTD.

The Suspicious Jackdaw

(Continued)

PATIENCE looked very happy and peaceful in her sleep, and the suspicious old lady could find nothing lying about to excite her doubts. The child had left her box open, and Madam Mortimer, though she did not choose to touch or move anything in it, used her eyes very sharply, and scrutinized its contents with astonishing deliberation. At length Patience moved, and Madam Mortimer, shading her candle, stole away again, feeling that she had done something to be ashamed of.

The next morning she sent for Patience, and said to her, "Patience, I told you that I had lost my red necklace, I must have you to help me to search for it; but first tell me whether you know where it is?"

"I know where I think it is, ma'am," Patience answered quite simply.

"Where?" asked her mistress; but she spoke and looked so severely that Patience hung her head and faltered, and at last said, "She didn't know, she only thought it might be;" and when pressed for an answer, she said, "She thought it might be in the empty side of the tea-caddy, for Jack often took things and put them into it." While the little girl spoke she looked so bashful and confused, that her mistress was confirmed in her bad opinion of her, but she allowed her to help all the morning in searching for the lost necklace; "for, after all," she thought, "I may be mistaken."

However, the necklace was not to be found; and though the jackdaw chattered and bustled about a great deal, and told over and over again, in the jackdaw's language, what he had done with it, nobody took the slightest notice of him; and the longer she searched, the more unhappy Madam Mortimer became.

"It is not the value of the necklace," she often said to herself, "but it is the being obliged to suspect this child, that I am so sorry for; for she was the only person in the wide world that I felt I could trust, excepting my own children."

But if people trust *only* one person, and can make up their minds to be distrustful of every one else, their suspicions are almost sure at last to reach the one remaining; and so Madam Mortimer had now found.

She sent for the little maid's mother, and without

finding fault with the child, said to her that she did not require her services any longer; and when the mother said, "I hope it is for no fault that you part with her, ma'am?" she replied evasively, "Patience has her faults like other people;" and with that answer the mother was obliged to be satisfied.

When Patience was gone her mistress felt very unhappy. She had felt a pleasure in her company, because she was such a child, and so guileless. She had meant to keep her with her, and teach her so long as she lived, and trust her; but now all this was over, and she had nobody whom she chose to trust. The jackdaw, too, appeared to feel dull; there was nobody to play with him and carry him on her shoulder. He was dull too, because he had lost that pretty necklace, for he often thought he should like to have it again to put among his treasures on the roof; therefore, he was fond of flying to the edge of the well, and gabbling there with great volubility; but I need not say that his chatter and his regret did not make the necklace float.

After a time, however, he found something else to amuse him, for one of Madam Mortimer's sons and his little boy came to visit her, and the jackdaw delighted in teasing the little fellow, and pecking his heels, and stealing his bits of string, and hiding his pencils; while the boy, on the other hand, was constantly teasing the bird, stroking his feathers the wrong way, snatching away his crusts, and otherwise plaguing him.

"I wish Patience was here to play with that child, and keep him from teasing my Jack," said the old lady fretfully. "I get so infirm that children are a trouble to me."

"Who is Patience?" asked her son.

So then Madam Mortimer told him the whole story; the boy and the jackdaw having previously gone out of the room together—the boy tantalizing him, and the bird gabbling and pecking at his ankles. When she had finished, her son said, "Mother, I believe this will end in your suspecting me next! Why did you not ascertain whether the girl was innocent or guilty before you parted with her?"

"I feel certain she is guilty," answered the mother, "and I never mean to trust any servant again."

"But if you could be certain she was innocent?" asked the son.

"Why, then, I would never suspect a servant

again, I think," she replied. "Certainly I should never suspect her—she seemed as open as the day—and you do not know, son, what a painful thing it is to have nobody about me that I can trust."

"Excuse me, mother," replied the son, "you mean nobody that you do trust; for all your servants have been with you for years, and deserve to be trusted, as far as we can see."

"Well, well," said the mother, "it makes me unhappy enough, I assure you, to be obliged to suspect everybody; and if I could have that child back I should be truly glad; but I cannot harbour a thief."

At this point of the discourse the boy and the jackdaw were heard in the yard making such a noise, and quarrelling, that the son went down, at his mother's request, to see what was the matter. "He is a thief," said the boy; "I saw him fly to the roof with a long bit of blue ribbon that belongs to cook."

The jackdaw gabbled angrily in reply, and it is highly probable that he understood part of the accusation, for he ruffled his feathers, and hopped about in a very excited way; and as the boy kept pointing at him, jeering him, the bird at last flew at him angrily, and gave him a very severe peck with a loud croak, that might have been meant to express, "Take that."

Having it on his hands to make up this quarrel, the little boy's father could not go on with the discourse he had begun with his mother at that time; but when he found another opportunity he said a great deal to her; and if it had not been that, the jackdaw's suspicions being aroused, that troublesome bird would insist on listening to all he said, with his head on one side and his twinkling eye fixed on his face,—and if he would have been quiet, instead of incessantly changing his place, as if he thought he could hear better on the right arm of the chair than the left, it is possible that the gentleman's discourse might have had a great effect on the old lady's mind; as it was, he interrupted his mistress's attention so much, that it is doubtful whether she remembered what her son had been talking of. And there was no sooner a pause in what the jackdaw probably regarded as a disagreeable subject, than he hopped to a private little cupboard that he kept under the turned-up edge of the carpet, and bringing out five or six mouldy bits of bread, laid them in a row on the rug before his mistress and her son, and walking about before them with an air of reflection, seemed as if he would have said, "I must attend to my business, whether people talk or not."

"I never saw such a queer fellow in my life as that bird is!" exclaimed the son.

"Why, Jack, you miser!" said his mistress; "one would think you were starved."

The jackdaw gabbled something which was no doubt meant for impertinence, till hearing footsteps outside the door, he hastily snatched up some of his mouldy property and flew with it to the top of the cabinet; then he stood staring at the remainder, fluttering his wings, and making a great outcry, for he did not dare to fly down for it, because his little tormentor had just rushed into the room.

"Papa, papa!" exclaimed the boy.

"Hold your tongue, Jack," cried the grandmother; "one at a time is enough."

"Come, I will take you on my knee," said his father, "and then the daw will fly down for his bread."

The daw no sooner saw his little enemy in a place of safety, than he descended, snatched up his bread, and having secured it all, came again to give the boy a malicious little peck.

"Now what do you want to say?" asked his father.

"Papa," repeated the boy, "do currants ever grow under water?"

"No," said his father.

"But," replied the boy, "there is something growing in the well, just under water, that looks like currants; and, papa, will you get it for me, please, for I should like to have it if it is good to eat."

"Pooh!" said his grandmother, "the boy is dreaming."

But the boy made such a fuss about the bunch of currants, and was so positive as to their growing down in the well, that though it was now autumn, and the leaves were falling, and all the currants were either eaten up or stowed away in jam pots long before, his father and grandmother allowed him to take them to the well; but first the latter put on her black silk bonnet and her cloak, and fetched her stick from its place, lamenting all the while that Patience was not there to do all her little errands for her.

Now the weather all that summer and autumn had been remarkably dry, and the consequence was, that this old well, which had long been disused because it contained so little water, had now less than ever, but that little was clear; though when the old lady and her son looked over the edge they could not at first see down into it, because a few drops of rain had fallen and had wetted the fern leaves, which were still dripping a little and covering its surface with dimples.

"There are no red currants here, nor plums either, my child," said the grandmother; and as she spoke she put down her gold-headed stick and shook the tuft of ferns that had been dripping, till she had shaken down all the water they contained.



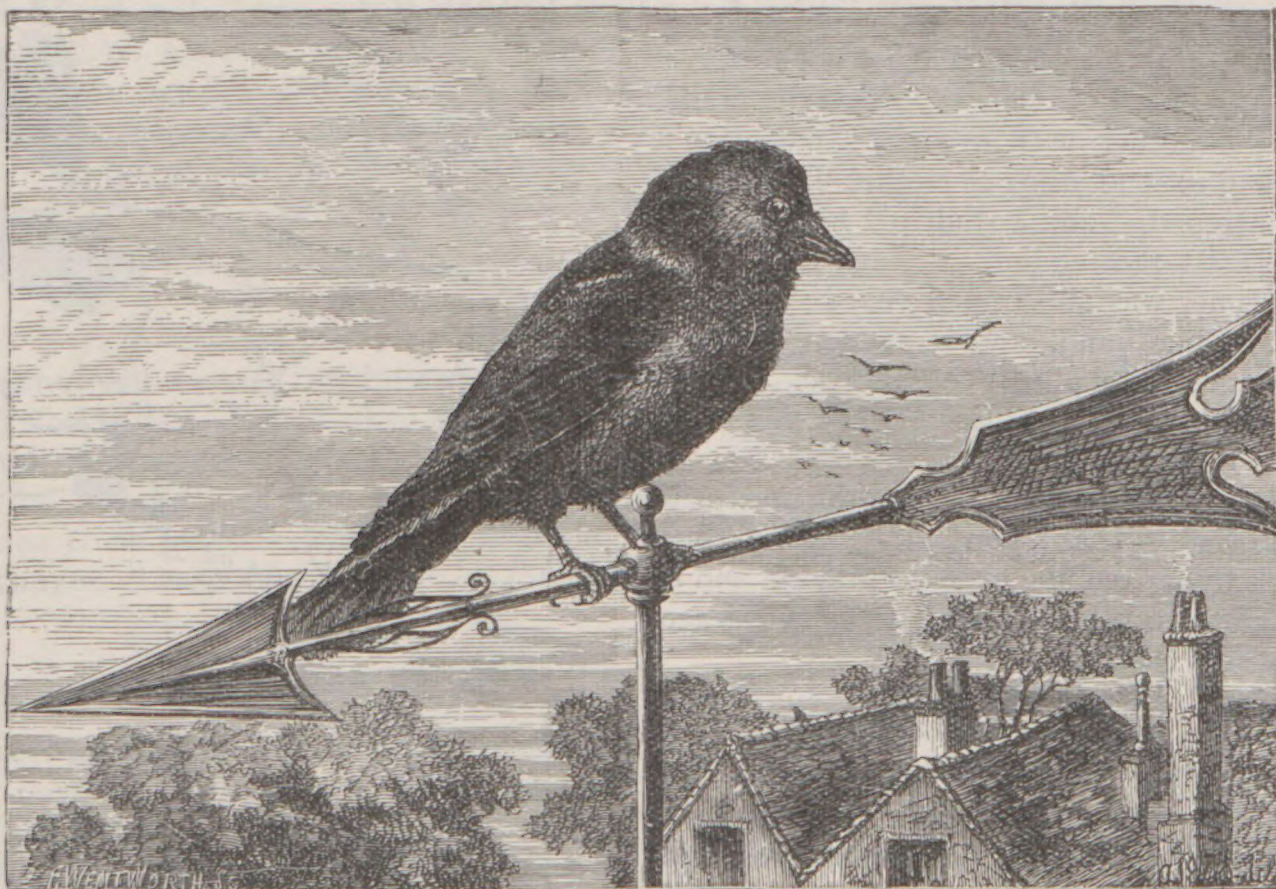
The surface was now covered with little eddies and dimples. But when the water grew smooth again, "There they are!" exclaimed the boy; "there are the currants. Look, grandmother, they lie just under the shadow of those long leaves."

"I see something," replied his grandmother, shading her eyes; "but it is six times as long as a bunch of currants, and the berries are three times as large. I shouldn't wonder, son, if that was my cornelian necklace."

"I will see if we can ascertain," said her son; "there are several ladders about the premises, and the well is not at all deep." So off he went, leaving the old lady and her grandson to look at the necklace; but the jackdaw, having by this time missed his mis-

silent while the ladder was lowered, and while the gardener's boy descended to the bottom of the well and groped about with his hands, for there was not a foot of water. "There is my necklace, sure enough," exclaimed the old lady as the boy lifted up the long row of shining beads; "bring it out, James." "Please, ma'am, here's the great silver skewer that was lost a year ago," exclaimed the boy; "and, dear me, here's the nozzle of a candlestick."

The old lady held up her hands; she had parted with a good cook, in consequence of the loss of this skewer. But the sight of the necklace dangling from the youth's hand as he prepared to mount the ladder was too much for the jackdaw—he suddenly flew down, gave the hand a tremendous peck with his hard



tress from her accustomed haunts, and being suspicious lest she might be inspecting some of his hoards, had set a search on foot for her, and now flew up screaming and making a great outcry, as if he thought he was going to be robbed. However, having lighted on the edge of the well, and observed that the necklace was there all safe, he felt more at his ease; and if his mistress could have understood the tongue of a daw, she would have now heard him relate how he threw it there; as it was, she only heard him gabble, and saw him now and then peck at the boy's pinafore. When the jackdaw saw a ladder brought, however, his mind misgave him that his mistress meant to get the necklace out again; and his thievish spirit sank very low. However, being a politic bird, he was quite

bill, and while the boy cried out and dropped the necklace, the bird made a sudden dart at it, snatched it before it touched the water, and flew up with it into a tree. There he rested a few minutes playing with the wet necklace, and shaking it in the sunlight; but not all his mistress's entreaties and coaxing could bring him down, and in a few minutes he flew off again and settled on the roof of the house.

There, in less than ten minutes, he was found by his mistress and her son, with all his ill-gotten gains spread out before him. Everything was taken from him, and when his mistress saw the articles whose loss had caused her to suspect almost every one about her of theft, she was so vexed that she actually shed tears. "Mother," said her son, "it appears to me that you

have trusted the only creature about you that was utterly unworthy of trust ! ”

The old lady was so much disheartened that she could not say a word ; but such is the audacity of a jackdaw's nature, that not half an hour after this, when the footboy brought in the tea things, Jack walked in after him with a grave expression of countenance, and hopped on to the tea table as if nothing had happened.

“ Patience shall come back again,” thought the old lady ; “ I'll send for her and her mother, and I'll never suspect her any more. It is plain enough now that Jack must have thrown my property down there.”

So the mother of Patience was sent for, but, alas, what disappointments people are doomed to ! The mother expressed herself much obliged to Madam Mortimer, but said that her cousin in London, hearing that she was out of a place, had sent for her to serve in her shop, “ And that I look on as a great rise in life for her,” said the mother, with an air of satisfaction : “ and I am going to send a box of clothes to her next week,” she continued, “ and I shall tell her, ma'am, that you have not forgotten her.”

Madam Mortimer was very much vexed ; but the necklace was in her hand, and a sudden thought struck her that she would give it to Patience. So she said, with a sigh, “ Well, Mrs. Grey, when you send the box, you may put this in it.”

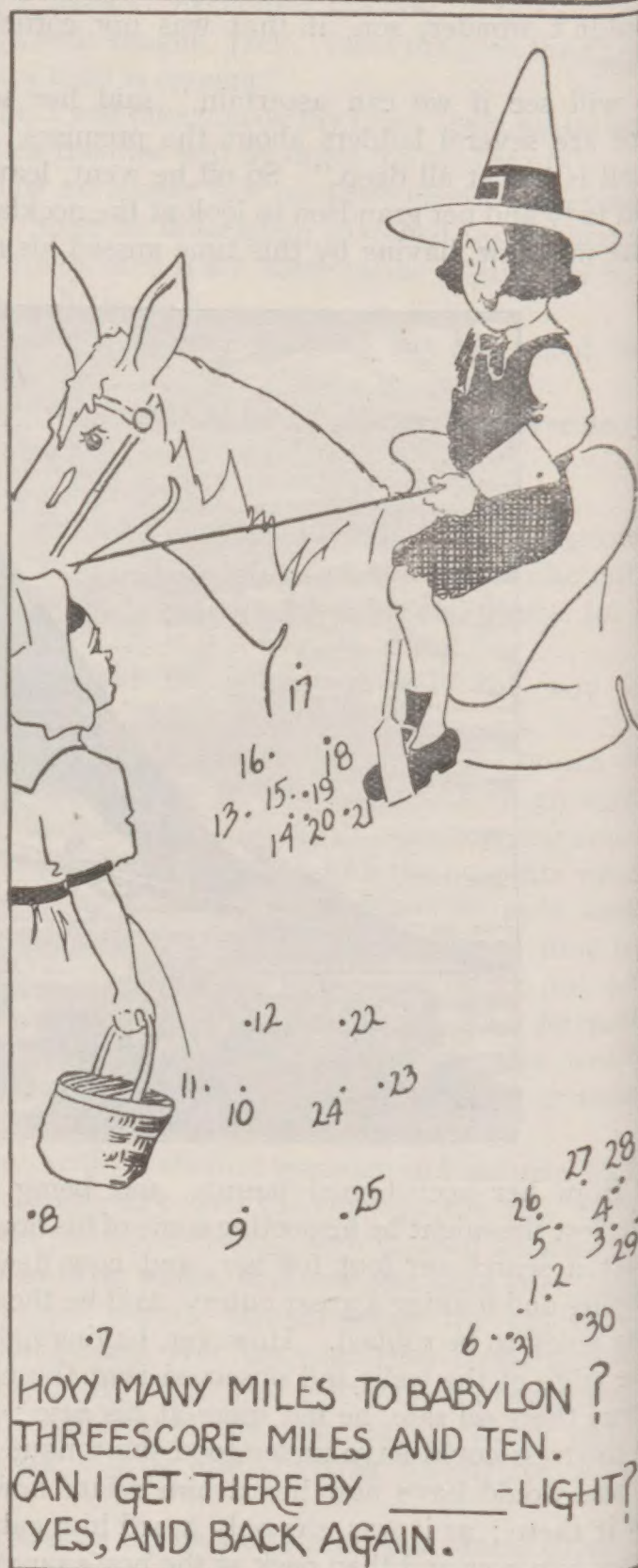
Her mother at first looked pleased, but she presently drew back, and said, “ Thank you kindly, ma'am, but that necklace is by far too fine for my Patience, and it might do her harm to have it, and I never encourage her to wish for fine clothes.”

“ Good evening, then,” said Madam Mortimer ; and as the woman went away, she walked softly to the hole in the blind, and watched her talking and laughing with the cook, rather, as it seemed, in a triumphant way, as if she was exulting in the good fortune of her child, and the evident discomfiture of her former mistress. “ It is entirely the fault of that thieving jackdaw,” said the old lady, as she returned to her chair ; and as she spoke she saw the suspicious bird sitting listening to her with his head on one side. “ It is enough to make anybody suspicious to lose things as I have lost them,” she thought. “ However, I shall soon leave off the habit, as I find it a bad one. I wish I hadn't sent Patience away ; but, perhaps, if I had been kinder to her than I was, she would have given me cause to suspect her before long.”

Madam Mortimer then settled herself in her chair and began to doze. When she awoke, the necklace was gone again ; and perhaps it is a proof that she really was somewhat improved, that though she said, “ I suspect, Jack, you know where that necklace is,”

she never took any steps in the matter, but left her glittering stones in the bird's greedy keeping ; and after taking a little time for consideration, put a patch upon the hole in the blind.

MOTHER GOOSE DOT PUZZLE



Beginning at the small dot at figure 1 draw a line to the small dot at figure 2, and from there to figure 3, and so on. You will then see what you will see.



SMILES

*"The happy smiles of the young
are the sunshine of the old"*



THE head-master was asking a few questions in the infants' class.

"Well, little people, I wonder if you could tell me who Joan of Arc's father was?"

After a moment's hesitation one little boy put up his hand and answered promptly, "Noah, sir."

Sent in by MARY PEMBERTON,
The School House, Old Windsor, Berks,
to whom a book prize has been awarded.

✢ ✢ ✢

THE master was talking to his class about miracles.

"Supposing," he said, "you saw a man fall from a high roof, land on his head, get up, and walk away, what would you say?" No answer. "Supposing the same thing happened again soon after?" No answer. "Supposing this man did that three times in a day, what would you call it?" "'Abit," answered a small boy.

Sent in by HARRY HUTTON,
12 Worston Place, Blackburn.

✢ ✢ ✢

THE minister was making an interminable call on one of his flock. He sat and talked on and on. The little daughter of the house, who had been told several times to be "good," and to "keep quiet," at last could stand it no longer. "Mother," said she in a hoarse whisper, "hasn't he brought his Amen with him?"

Sent in by ELLA GIBSON,
Afton, Cregagh Park, Belfast, Ireland.

✢ ✢ ✢

DURING the progress of a late duke's funeral through a small town in Scotland, the following colloquy between two women was overheard:—

One, absorbed in the contemplation of the signs of woe, exclaimed, "Poor woman! she will be sair lamented."

"Woman!" said the other, "gae wa' wi' ye, it's a man."

"Gae wa' wi' ye yoursel'," rejoined the other with an expression of the utmost contempt; "wha disna ken that a duke's the she o' a drake?"

✢ ✢ ✢

"MOTHER dear," said Dolly soberly, "do you know what Dick and I are going to give you for your birthday?"

"Can't guess," smiled Mother.

"A rose bowl," announced Dolly.

"A rose bowl? But I have a lovely one."

"No, Mother dear; you haven't *now*," said Dolly, still more soberly. "We've broken it."

"GEORGIE, I shouldn't slide down the banisters like that."

"Wouldn't you, grandma? Show me how you'd do it."—*Daily News*.

✢ ✢ ✢

"MRS. JENKINS requests the pleasure of Captain Brown's company to a small party on Friday evening next.

"21 Spriggins Place, Monday."

"Captain Brown presents his compliments to Mrs. Jenkins, and regrets that thirteen privates will be detained by habeas corpus writs, and two sergeants are on the sick list; the rest of Captain Brown's company will have much pleasure in waiting on Mrs. Jenkins on Friday evening."

✢ ✢ ✢

A CHILD was crying in a street close by Charing Cross. A compassionate lady, passing at the time, stopped and asked him what was the matter.

The child replied, "Cos I've lost a penny mother gave me."

"Ah, well, never mind that," said the lady; "here is another for you," and proceeded on her way, but had not gone far when she heard the little fellow bellowing even more lustily than before.

She turned back and again asked the cause, upon which the little urchin answered, "Why, if I 'adn't lost that there first one, I should 'ave 'ad tuppence."

✢ ✢ ✢

A LITTLE girl had been to church for the first time, and on her return home her mother asked her if she liked it. "Yes," said the little girl; "but there is one thing I didn't think was fair." "What was that, dear?" "Why, one man did all the work, and then another man came round and got all the money."

Sent in by EILEEN COLBOURNE,
31 Pulborough Road, Southfields, S.W. 18.

✢ ✢ ✢

THE schoolroom was very, very hot, and Johnny felt much too bored to do the task before him—writing an essay on a football match. Too late he realized that but five minutes remained before his effort would be collected. But Johnny was an ingenious youth, and across the blank paper he wrote,—

"Heavy rain, match cancelled!"

Sent in by CRAWFORD POOLE,
9 Millerfield Place, Edinburgh.

✢ ✢ ✢

Bertie. "My uncle is so absent-minded. Once he lost his walking-stick, and then found it was in his hand all the time."

Bobbie. "Well, I know an Irishman who once got out of bed and struck a match to see if he had blown out the candle. Ha, ha!"

Sent in by GEORGINA A. GRANT,
109 Park Street, Aberdeen.

P.J.

THE SECRET SERVICE BOY

BY LORD FREDERIC HAMILTON

EPISODE II

THE MAN WITH THE SQUINT

AFTER Macdonald's departure, P.J., having resumed his own clothes, was called into the sitting-room by Ambrose.

"The warning about this air-raid has changed the whole of my plans. I don't forget that it is entirely you that we have to thank for that news. The raid is planned for Friday night, which happens to be New Year's Day. I may tell you in the strictest confidence that a certain illustrious lady is at present at Sandringham, and I shall go down to Norfolk myself on the Thursday. I may happen to require a translator there, as that will save the time wasted in sending documents up to London and back. Would you care to come to Norfolk with me?"

P.J. could scarcely believe his ears. "I should simply love it," he answered.

"One moment, please. I do not want you to attract any attention. You look three years younger than your real age. Have you any objections to putting back the hands of the clock, and to going back again to shorts, stockings, and bare knees? No one will notice you dressed like that, and we will call you my nephew."

"Oh, Mr. Ambrose! I haven't worn shorts since I was eleven. If any Stonebridge fellow were to see me dressed like a horrid little tick, I should never hear the end of it; I should be fearfully ragged about it. You really don't know what the chaps would say."

"And yet you put on the page's livery of your own accord to-day."

"Oh! that was a disguise. Secret Service men have got to wear disguises."

"And the shorts will be a disguise, too."

"Of course, if it is a disguise, that's different. All right, Mr. Ambrose."

"Thank you. We will go to an outfitter's to-morrow and rig you out. We are not very likely to come across any of your Stonebridge friends. I shall be starting at nine on Thursday. We will go down in my car."

Mr. Davenant was out of bed before seven on the Thursday morning, and arrayed himself with some misgivings in the very juvenile garments which Ambrose had purchased for him the day before.

"I'd better take my motor-driving licence with me, and then perhaps Mr. Ambrose will let me drive part of the way," he said, with a sudden inspiration which was subsequently to prove a most useful one.

Mr. Davenant, senior, had been one of the pioneers of motoring in England, and had taught his son to drive at a very early age. He had also managed to

procure a licence for his son soon after the latter's fifteenth birthday, in spite of the age regulations.

P.J. surveyed himself with his shorts and bare knees in a full-length mirror, before leaving his home.

"You positively beastly little tick!" he remarked, scowling at his own reflection. "It would be too awful to meet a Stonebridge chap got up like this, when I'm close on sixteen!"

As Ambrose's car purred through the northern suburbs of London, P.J. begged to be allowed to drive.

"I don't know any of the distances by road, Mr. Ambrose," he said, "but I know them all by rail, from reading Bradshaw: Liverpool Street to Cambridge 55 miles, to Ely 70 miles, to Hunstanton 111 miles. I hope that you don't mind; I bagged your Bradshaw to read at the hotel. Where are we going to stay? I don't suppose that there will be any Stonebridge fellows there. I was simply green with funk at Victoria this morning in case any one I knew should see me in these horrid shorts."

"We are going, my little friend, to a village pub, the 'Leicester Arms,' at Fenham. It is centrally situated for my work, and it has a telephone, both trunk and local. I'll guarantee that no Stonebridge boys will be stopping there."

On reaching their destination, a most modest hostelry, P.J. was set to work at once after luncheon translating some papers which Ambrose had brought with him, and was kept at his task till nightfall.

"You can have a day off to-morrow, P.J.," said Ambrose, "and I think that you have earned it. I am sorry to tell you that our friend of yesterday—"

"The cock-eyed man," interpolated P.J.

"—gave Jones the slip very neatly at the Oxford Circus Bakerloo Tube. The platform was rather crowded, and the fellow simple disappeared. Jones is a good man, too."

"You told me that his name was Grünebaum, I think. I say, Mr. Ambrose, please tell me honestly if I don't look an awful ass in these things at my age. I can't help thinking that people keep staring at me."

"My dear boy, you can make your mind perfectly easy. If I didn't know you, I should put you down as a tall boy of eleven or twelve. You look absolutely natural."

Next morning P.J., being allowed a holiday, went for a stroll by himself. After a while he reached another village down the street of which a motor car was approaching him from the opposite direction. Mr. Davenant's mechanical eye had noted that it was a Mercedes, when his attention was diverted from the car to its solitary occupant. The face seemed, oddly enough, at the same time familiar and unfamiliar. Suddenly he caught a glimpse of the stranger's eyes.

"By George!" exclaimed P.J. to himself, "it's Grünebaum! He's shaved off his moustache, that's what alters him so, but one can't go wrong with that cock-eye of his. I'm certain it's him."

The motor halted in front of the post office, whose board proclaimed that the village was Horningham, and the occupant went in. Mr. Davenant noticed that no telegraph wires ran into the front of the post office, and he then walked round it, to satisfy himself

that no wires came in at the back. He arrived at a quick decision.

"I'm going to pinch that motor," he said to himself, "even if I have to go to quod for it. There are no wires, so they can't telegraph or telephone about it, and Grünebaum will have to walk on his flat feet to another post office. Here goes!"

Switching on the magneto, he cranked up, and, jumping into the car, he started cautiously. He had, however, made a considerable amount of noise, and just as he was getting under way, the owner of the car emerged from the post office, shouting and gesticulating violently. P.J. blindly took the first turn to the right he came to, trusting to his luck to avoid running into a *cul-de-sac*. Once out of the village, he twisted and turned down every available side road, praying that it might not have a blind end. At length, finding himself on a perfectly straight stretch of road, he opened his throttle, in defiance of all the speed regulations in the world, and devoured space. When he had put half a dozen miles between himself and the cross-eyed Mr. Grünebaum he pulled up, and began to consider what steps he ought to take.

"I've never stolen a motor car before," he reflected, "and I'm absolutely blowed if I know what to do."

His mechanical instinct led him to study the fittings of the car. His previous experience had been almost entirely confined to Daimlers. There were novelties connected with a Mercedes which appealed to him.

"Now what the deuce can those two long rods be for?" he pondered. "I never saw anything like them before. These little levers on each side of the car work them, but what do they do?"

His curiosity getting the better of him, he jumped out, and examined the front of the radiator. He noted that the head-lamps were fitted with electric light, and judging from the size of the incandescent bulbs, electric light of quite unusual power. A long rod led straight up to each lamp, one on either side of the car. He worked the little levers. The joints were evidently well oiled, for they worked very easily, but nothing whatever happened. P.J. was much puzzled. He got out again and walked to the front of the car, when to his amazement the two electric head-lights, instead of exhibiting the gleaming surfaces of their reflectors, merely showed two black sightless discs.

Mr. Davenant whistled. "Now I begin to understand," he cried. He put the levers back to their original position, and the burnished metal of the reflectors again gleamed, the collapsible black shutters opening so flat as to be imperceptible.

He then examined the head-lamps themselves, and found that they were most ingeniously pivoted. By removing a catch, and working a screw, they could be tilted upwards to any angle required.

"It's really an awfully cute dodge," acknowledged the mechanical Mr. Davenant. "Even I could do Morse code with those levers as easily as shelling peas. He has electrics because an acetylene flame would break the glass when it was tilted. That wireless outfit of mine at Beechfield before the war did teach

one Morse at any rate. But what the dickens ought I to do with the car? What price taking it to a police station? Good business, I think, but I'll first bag every bit of paper there is in the car for Mr. Ambrose."

Mr. Davenant then transferred every scrap of paper from the pockets on the doors to his own pockets, and then lifted all the cushions to make sure that nothing else was hidden. He drove on to the first signpost, and followed the road indicated as leading to —, five miles away. At — he inquired for the police station, and leaving the car outside, he asked for some person in authority. He was shown in to a Sergeant.

"Oh! Sergeant," he observed airily, "I just wanted to say that I've stolen a motor car. It's outside. I stole it from the Horningham post office."

The Sergeant looked at him sternly.

"If you've come here to lark, young fellow, you'll find that you've come to the wrong shop. Clear out of this."

"But I have, really and truly, pinched a motor car. There it is; you can see it through the window."

"You'll be getting yourself into trouble, me lad," answered the Sergeant. "Three to five years in a reformatory is what you're asking for. I advise you to clear out, and quick is the word."

"Now, I'll tell you why I stole it. It belongs to a German spy called Grünebaum, and it's fitted with a signalling dodge; so I pinched it, and now I hand it over to you. Will you take charge of it?"

"Young boy found in illegal possession of a valuable motor car, presumed to be stolen," went on the Sergeant, who had a typically slow-working East Anglian brain. "It's my duty to detain you, and to warn you that anything you say will be used in evidence against you."

"But I'm not in possession of the car. I've handed it over to you, so it's you that are in possession of it, and you can't arrest yourself."

"Found in illegal possession of a motor car," repeated the slow-witted Sergeant. "A very serious offence indeed."

"I've told you once already that I bagged the car because it is fitted with a signalling stunt, and because it belongs to a German spy. If I had pinched it to keep it for myself, I just ask you whether I would have brought it straight to a police station, and whether I'd have told you bang out that I'd done it."

This sentence was much too long to filter through to the Sergeant's brain.

"The theft of motor cars is a serious offence," he repeated stolidly, "so is illegal possession of a car by a young boy. Lucky for you, me lad, that you will come under the Juvenile Offenders Act."

"Sergeant," asked P.J., powerless against such obtuseness, "did you ever hear of Mr. Ambrose of Scotland Yard?"

"I may 'ave; on the other 'and, I may not 'ave," replied the cautious Sergeant. "What then?"

"I'm his—" P.J. hesitated, for, recalling his shorts and bare knees, he realized how hopeless it would be to convince this dull-brained official that

he was Ambrose's unpaid assistant at the apparent age of twelve. "I'm Mr. Ambrose's nephew, and we're staying at the 'Leicester Arms' at Fenham. You've got a telephone there. Do you mind ringing up the 'Leicester Arms' and asking whether Mr. Ambrose didn't arrive there yesterday, and if any one came with him?"

In five minutes the Sergeant announced, "Mr. Ambrose arrived at the 'Leicester Arms' yesterday at one, with his nephew, Master Davenant."

"Well, I'm Davenant, Sergeant, and here is my motor-driving licence to prove it."

The Sergeant studied the licence with great care.

"If you're Mr. Ambrose's nephew, what I want to know is how you came to be in illegal possession of a motor car, supposed to be stolen."

"Oh! Sergeant, I've told you ten times already. Let's go outside, and I'll show you how the signal arrangement works. It's jolly ingenious. I'd better drive the car into that yard, and you can lock it up there."

In the yard P.J. manipulated the levers, and showed the Sergeant how the lamps could be totally obscured, or made to show at will.

After a few minutes' thought, the purport of this soaked slowly through to the Sergeant's brain. "Very serious this," he commented. "Very serious indeed! Those lamps would not be of much use by day, though."

"No. A lamp usually shows up better by night," agreed P.J. with a perfectly grave face. "If you will take charge of the car, I'll try and bring Mr. Ambrose here this afternoon, Sergeant. When is the next train to Fenham?"

"Meaning the next train going to Fenham from here. Let me see. At 2.15, in ten minutes' time. By rights I ought to detain you for being in illegal possession of—"

"Yes, you said so once or twice before. Don't think me rude, but I must catch that train."

Mr. Davenant, fortified during his short journey with the contents of a large bag of sandwiches which he had purchased, found on reaching the "Leicester Arms" that Ambrose had not yet returned. He went accordingly for a second stroll into the country, and had gone about three-quarters of a mile, when, on turning a corner, he came face to face with the redoubtable Mr. Grünebaum himself, emerging from a side road.

Grünebaum recognized him at once, and gave a hoarse shout; and as the expression of his face was distinctly menacing, Mr. Davenant did not pause to think, but took to his heels forthwith, with Grünebaum after him. Now in his bedroom at Beechfield, in the pleasant suburb of Dulwich, a long shelf of gleaming silver or of duller pewter pots bore witness to the fact that P.J. was unusually fleet of foot, since they were variously inscribed "Junior" or "Senior Hundred Yards," "Junior" or "Senior Quarter Mile," or "Junior" or "Senior Hurdles"; but all alike testified that they had been won by "P. J. Davenant." This accomplishment stood him in good stead. Grünebaum proved to be a remarkably good runner, and P.J., turning blindly to left or right,

was always conscious of his adversary pounding close behind him. Presently the pursuing footsteps ceased, and P.J. heard a loud report followed by a "phut" in the road, barely a yard from him. There was a second report and a third, followed by a sharp crack in the hedge, as a branch or two broke. P.J. ran on at the very top of his speed, as the stopping of his pursuer to fire had given him a useful lead. He reached four cross-roads and turned to the right, only to find a perfectly straight length of half a mile in front of him. He did not dare to retrace his steps, but vaulted over a gate, and crouched down panting in the ditch, behind a thick hedge, gradually and cautiously working his way towards the corner where the four cross-roads met. He heard Grünebaum's footfall, and through the hedge saw him pause, "faint yet pursuing," at the cross-roads. A glance at the empty straight stretch determined his pursuer to take the winding road to the left. Mr. Davenant gradually recovered his wind.

"I must say that that fellow is a pretty useful sprinter for an old man," he reflected, with all the insolence of his fifteen summers. "I wonder if he is any good over hurdles."

At that moment he heard a motor car approaching down the road, and peering through the hedge, he saw to his great joy that it was Ambrose, with a stranger seated beside him.

"Mr. Ambrose! Mr. Ambrose!" he yelled, and the car pulled up.

"I never saw such a boy for doing unexpected things, or for popping up in unexpected places!" cried Ambrose. "Whatever are you doing here?"

"Oh! I've had a great day! I stole a motor car, and then the police-sergeant wanted to arrest me, and I had a game of hare-and-hounds with Grünebaum, and he shot at me three times with a revolver and missed me." And Mr. Davenant, in a series of pants, told his full story.

"If you go straight on," he added as he climbed into the car, "we're bound to get him. He took the road that twists. I tell you, Grünebaum is a pretty useful man on his feet. I'm awfully glad you made me wear this rig-out, Mr. Ambrose, and that I had no overcoat, because I couldn't have run properly in my ordinary bags, and I'm chock-full of sandwiches, too."

"Put on my spare overcoat, P.J.," ordered Ambrose, "and you, Fox, take the wheel. This is one of my plain-clothes men," he added in explanation.

At the next turn of the road a man's figure was plainly visible.

"Crouch down in the tonneau, P.J. Don't let him see you. Slow down, Fox," he added to the plain-clothes man, "and be ready to put your brakes hard on when I give the word," and Ambrose felt under his coat for something. They drew level with Grünebaum.

"Stop, Fox!" ordered Ambrose, and levelling a revolver at Grünebaum's head, he shouted, "Hands up at once, Grünebaum, or I fire!"

As Grünebaum lifted his hands obediently, P.J., in defiance of orders, peeped out from the tonneau.

"It's more like the movies than ever," he gurgled, beside himself with delight. "Ripping! Positively ripping!"

"Fox," cried Ambrose, "if you look in the tonneau, you will find the rope I use for the luggage. Tie that man's hands behind him, and fasten him up."

Fox, with deft fingers, proceeded to secure the prisoner, and lifted him into the car. Mr. Davenport once began to talk to him most affably.

"You must have been a nailing good runner in your time," he observed presently. "Did you ever go in for hurdles, or cross-country work?" but he only got a scowl in reply.

Quite unabashed, P.J. continued,—

"I daresay you went in for long-distance running; I'm no good at that." Then, slipping into fluent German, he went on, "Those lamps in your car were very ingenious, and awfully well made."

"Young swine!" snarled Grünebaum.

"Look here! That's rude. You've been fairly asking for it, so you've got nothing to write home about. I'm afraid that you are rather a sulky chap, and that you can't be much of a sportsman," and so the conversation languished.

In due course they reached the police station at —, and P.J. jumped out to find the Sergeant.

"Here we are back again, Sergeant, you see! And this is Mr. Ambrose. Last time I brought you the car; now we have got the driver."

In two minutes or so this intelligence reached the Sergeant's brain. He smiled.

"That is satisfactory. Mr. Ambrose, sir, with regard to your nephew being found in illegal possession of a motor car, supposed to be stolen—"

"Yes, yes, we needn't go into that again," interrupted Ambrose. "You will place this prisoner in the cells, and to-morrow he will go under escort to Norwich. Strict confinement, remember."

P.J. then insisted on showing them how the lamps worked. Switching on the electric light, he was able, thanks to the little private wireless installation he had owned at Beechfield in pre-war days, and his familiarity with the Morse code, to give them an illustration of how the sliding shutters would work.

"Do you think that I might have those lamps for my own, Mr. Ambrose?" he asked rather diffidently.

"I've got a pal at Sydenham, and we could talk to each other quite easily with a lamp apiece. It would be rather fun talking across three miles."

Ambrose shook his head. "Against orders now, I am afraid, P.J."

Leaving the redoubtable Grünebaum in the Sergeant's charge, they returned to the "Leicester Arms."

"Wonderfully quick fellow, that Sergeant!" commented P.J. on the homeward drive. "Just as sharp as a needle! I should think that murderers and burglars must have an easy time of it round here."

After their evening meal, P.J. struggled in vain against his drowsiness.

"The air-raid is for to-night, and I'm awfully keen to see one, but I simply can't keep awake."

Mr. Davenport slept uninterruptedly till next morning, when he was informed by Ambrose that the air-

raid had proved a failure. No one had been killed, and the damage done had been quite insignificant.

"And I missed it all," sighed P.J. "That is the worst of too comfortable a bed."

"The Navy people had taken their precautions, and certain other people had also taken their precautions, but the air-raid would never have proved the complete failure it did had we not received timely warning of it. Don't be alarmed, I'm not going to praise you, for I know how you dislike it, but I cannot forget to whom our intelligence was due."

"Everybody has lucky flukes at times," observed P.J., flushing up. "Even that stupid policeman—or he'd never have been made a sergeant."

Ambrose then announced that he had still some business to transact, but that he hoped to be ready to start for London about noon.

His business completed, he was informed at the "Leicester Arms" that his assistant would be found in a neighbouring field; and on making his way there, guided by a terrific din, he found Mr. Davenport playing football most vigorously with some village boys. With his knack of rapid friendships, he was already on the easiest of terms with these young rustics, and was addressing them all by their nicknames.

Being summoned by Ambrose, a most disreputably dirty youth emerged from the struggling throng.

"I'm sorry to be in such a muck, Mr. Ambrose, but I had no proper footer things here, and one can't play without getting a little dirty. Norfolk seems such a muddy place! If I have a bit of a wash, and stick on a clean collar and clean stockings, I needn't sweat about brushing all the mud off my clothes, need I? You only bought me the one suit, but my overcoat will hide it all. Good-bye, you chaps! I've got to go now. Thanks awfully for letting me play with you. Good-bye, Jim! Good-bye, Hedgehog! Sorry I hacked you, Bunny! Cheerio, Carrots!" farewells which were raucously acknowledged.

"You seem the most extraordinary boy for making new friends."

"That's because every one is so decent to me, and those are quite nice chaps. May I drive, please?"

As they rolled London-wards, P.J. turned shyly to Ambrose. "Please may I go with you on your next job, Mr. Ambrose?" he asked.

"Certainly, later in the year, little friend. I have to go to Scotland the day after to-morrow for a whole fortnight, and you would be of no use there."

"Oh, blow! And I go back to school in ten days."

"At Easter-time I shall certainly utilize the services of quite the sharpest assistant I have ever had."

P.J. flushed. "Honest Injun, Mr. Ambrose?"

"Honest Indian. I'm going to drive you to Beechfield, because you hate being seen in shorts, eh?"

"Thanks awfully. Yes, I do; but it's only because I'm in such a blue funk of being seen by some other Stonebridge chap. So you'll take me on at Easter again?"

"Yes, honour bright."

"Good business! I shall look forward to it the whole term. Thank you, Mr. Ambrose. You don't know how I love being a Secret Service man."

Have You a Garden?

BY WINIFRED HAMMOND, F.R.H.S.

(Illustrations from photographs by Messrs. Ryder & Sons.)

PROBABLY most of you have had little gardens for years, but by the end of the summer haven't

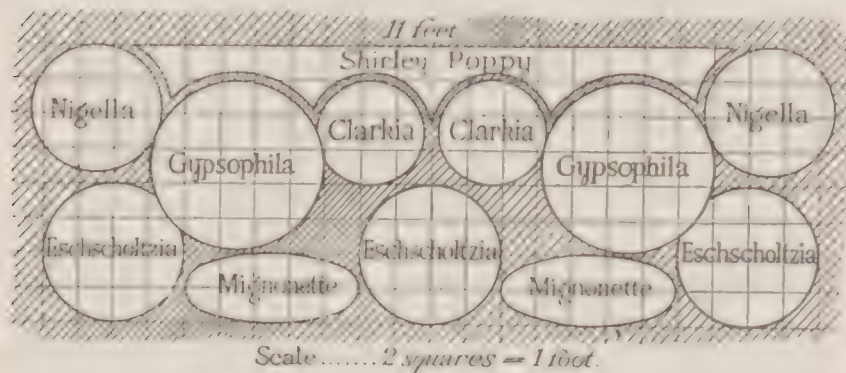


FIG. 1.

you felt that the result of your spring seed-sowing has hardly come up to your expectations?

If possible, choose a piece of ground that has been well dug in winter, for it will readily rake down to a fine surface, which is excellent for seed-sowing on a dry day and will be good for covering the seeds after sowing.



FIG. 2.

Early April is the best time for sowing most flower seeds, so make up your mind that your garden shall really be a "thing of beauty" and "a joy for ever" (even *after* your summer holiday!).



FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.

Do not buy gaily coloured packets of seeds, for in many cases the *packets* are of more value than the

seeds themselves; but send your list to one of the well-known seed-growers who specialize in cheap packets.

Choose your seed list carefully, thinking out beforehand whether your favourite flowers can be obtained in colours that will look well together; and make a little rough plan of your garden, such as is shown in Fig. 1—a plot 11 feet by 4 feet.

Possibly none of your gardens will be exactly the size and shape shown above, but you can easily



FIG. 5.

adapt it by lengthening the circles into ovals in whichever direction is necessary; but whatever plan you settle on, remember that the lower-growing plants, like Mignonette and Eschscholtzia (lovely word that! pronounced S-col-she-ah), should be near the front, and the taller plants at the back.

The fairy-like Gypsophila or Gauze Flower (Fig. 2) will not only be

very useful for the house, but it will also make a good "separator" between the pink or red Clarkia and the blue Nigella.

Isn't "Love-in-the-Mist" a pretty name for Nigella? (Fig. 3), and the plant is as pretty as its name. Its flowers are veiled by its feathery leaves that grow in a mist of little threads over it. The variety "Miss Jekyll" is a beautiful blue.

The best Poppy for cutting is the Mixed Shirley Poppy (Fig. 4), as the colours are so delicate and varied. Cut them when the little green calyx has just burst, showing a tiny bit of the colour within, as they will then last a long



FIG. 6.



FIG. 7.

time in water, but fall quickly if cut when fully opened.

If you haven't sown Clarkia (Fig. 5) before, both you and the "grown-ups" will love it, for it is very easily grown and provides masses of brilliant colour. The varieties "Salmon Queen" and "Scarlet Queen" are glorious both in the garden and the house.

Even the old-fashioned yellow Eschscholtzia (Fig. 6) had its good points; but the newer "Mixed" ones are in wonderful shades of crimson, pink, orange, and cream, and provide cut flowers with pretty foliage until the middle of October.

You should certainly grow some Giant-flowered Mignonette (Fig. 7), as it has such fragrant flowers. But put off sowing these seeds until next month, when I will tell you what you should do to be successful.

Next month, too, you will be able to read how to thin seedlings, how to protect them from birds and cats, and so on.

N.B.—The Gardening Correspondent will be pleased to answer any questions sent by readers as to points of culture, firms supplying cheap but good seeds, etc.

All inquiries must be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

STORIES for YOUNGER READERS



Naughty Kenneth

BY DOROTHY RUSSELL

KENNETH opened one sleepy eye and wondered where he was. Then he remembered Nurse was away on a short holiday and he was sleeping in Mother's room.

Mummy, however, was still fast asleep, and though a cheeky sunbeam was peeping in between the window curtains, Kenneth thought it must be very early; so he lay quite still and tried to think of all the nice things he would do. But after a while he grew restless, and his eyes twinkled with mischief.

"I'll get out of bed the wrong way a-purpose," thought the silly little fellow, "and then I'll be real naughty."

Kenneth managed very cleverly to get on

his clothes and socks, and with the exception of his buttons, he was ready by the time Mummy got up. Then he scampered off downstairs and ran out into the garden.

Half an hour later, Mary, the maid, with a very long face, said to Mummy,—

"If you please, ma'am, Master Kenneth has been and watered the drawing-room carpet all over with his little watering-can, and the floor is just sopping."

"Yes," cried Cook, coming out of the kitchen, drying her hands on her apron. "And if you please, ma'am, as soon as my back was turned his celliloid ducks was floating in the basin of fresh milk. He's a terror, ma'am, when his nurse is away, that's what he is."

"Dear! dear!" cried Mother, looking very grave. "I'm so sorry, Cook. You must boil the milk before we use it, and there won't be much harm done."

Then she followed Mary, and gazed in dismay at the soaking carpet.

"Kenneth!" she called; and again, still louder, "Kenneth! Kenneth!"

A rosy-cheeked little boy came running in from the garden.

"Come here and tell me the meaning of this!" And she drew the little boy into the room and pointed to the carpet.

"Yes, dat's what I did. You see, Mummy, there's all them lovely f'owers, so I watered 'em for a great treat."

It was quite true; there were flowers worked into the carpet, and Mummy did not think Kenneth meant to be naughty, so she explained that carpet flowers are not alive, and therefore do not need water.

Next they went into the kitchen, and Mummy held up two milky ducks.

"Now, Kenneth, you did know it was naughty to put these into the milk. Why did you do it?"

Kenneth put a fat finger into his mouth and looked at Mummy with a guilty face.

"I knowed it was naughty," he admitted, "and I knowed Cook would be coss; but she does look so red and funny when she's coss, it makes me laugh."

"You must tell Cook you are very sorry," insisted Mummy.

"Cook!" shrieked Kenneth, "I are sorry I spoilt Mummy's milk," then he ran quickly out of the kitchen and along the passage to the dining-room, followed more slowly by his Mother. She found him seated in his high chair, waiting for his "poddidge."

Just as Kenneth had finished breakfast Daddy came into the room.

When the gardener returned a few minutes later and found the bulbs gone, he scratched his head in much perplexity, while Kenneth chuckled with suppressed laughter.

"Master Kenneth," called Carter, "where be my bulbs?"

"You find them," laughed Kenneth.

"Now, Master Kenneth, you be a good little fellow, and tell me where they be."

"But I aren't a good little fellow to-day. You see, I got out of bed the wrong side a-purpose, 'cos I wanted to be a naughty boy."

"Oh! so you admit that, do you?" cried a stern voice from behind, and Kenneth felt a hand on his shoulder, and to his dismay saw his father close beside him.

"Now, Kenneth, listen to me. First tell Carter where you have hidden the bulbs, then you will go back to bed till lunch time, when I trust you will get out of bed again the right way and be a good little boy."

Kenneth seemed to think this quite a good joke, and, like the sensible little boy he really was, he showed Carter where he had hidden the bulbs, then ran into the house and went upstairs, and with one tiny sob crept into his little white bed, where he had plenty of time to realize what a foolish boy he had been. There Mummy found him an hour later fast asleep, a little wet tear-drop on his rosy cheek.

When he woke, he was careful to get out of bed on the *right* side, and running downstairs, he shouted gaily, "Mummy, Mummy, here's your good little boy come back again."

Of course Mummy took him in her arms and kissed him, and told him how glad she was to have her own little Kenneth, instead of the strange, naughty boy who had paid them a visit that morning.



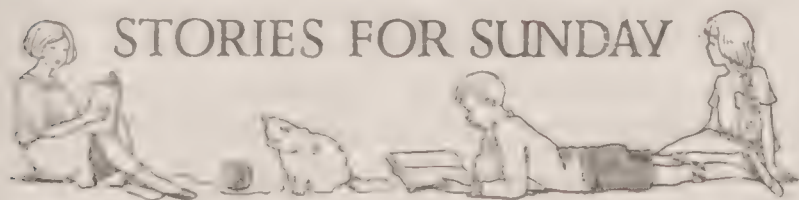
"Will you 'scuse me, please?" Kenneth said, "'cos I want to get down and play."

"You may, if you play quietly," agreed Mummy.

So he ran out into the garden and presently spied the gardener, and beside him a beautiful box of bulbs.

"Morning," said Kenneth politely. And Carter had only time to reply, "Morning, Master Kenneth," when he was called away.

In a twinkling Kenneth picked up a handful of bulbs and hid them in a large red empty flower-pot, which he covered up with a leaf. He then hid behind a tree to see what Carter would do.



A Tale of Saint Nicholas

THERE was once a nobleman who had no children and who longed for a son above everything else in the world. Night and day he prayed to Saint Nicholas that he would grant him his request, and at last a son was born. He was a beautiful child, and the father was so delighted and so grateful to the saint who had listened to his prayers that, every year on the child's birthday, he made a great feast in honour of Saint Nicholas and a grand service was held in the church.

Now the Evil One grew very angry each year when this happened, for it made many people go to church and honour the good saint, neither of which things pleased the Evil One at all. So each year he tried to think of some plan that would put an end to these rejoicings, and he decided at last that if only he could do some evil to the child, the parents would blame Saint Nicholas and all would be well.

It happened just then to be the boy's sixth birthday, and a greater feast than ever was being held. It was late in the afternoon, and the gardener and porter and all the servants were away keeping holiday too. So no one noticed a curious-looking pilgrim who came and sat close to the great iron gates which led into the courtyard. He had on the ordinary robe of a poor pilgrim, but the hood was drawn so far over his face that nothing but a dark shadow could be seen inside. And indeed that was as well, for this pilgrim was a demon in disguise, and his wicked, black face would have frightened any one who saw it. He could not enter the courtyard for the great gates were always kept locked, and, as you know, the porter was away that day, feasting with all the other servants.

But before very long the little boy grew weary of his birthday feast, and having had all he wanted, he begged to be allowed to go to play in the garden. His parents knew that the gardener always looked after him there, so they told him he might go. They forgot that the gardener was not there just then.

The child played happily alone for some time and then wandered into the courtyard, and looking out of the gate saw a poor pilgrim resting there.

"What are you doing here?" asked the child, "and why do you sit so still?"

"I am a poor pilgrim," answered the demon, try-

ing to make his harsh voice sound as gentle as possible, "and I have come all the way from Rome. I am resting here because I am so weary and footsore and have had nothing to eat all day."

"I will let you in, and take you to my father," said the child; "this is my birthday, and no one must go hungry to-day."

But the demon pretended he was too weak to walk, and begged the boy to bring some food out to him.

Then the child ran back to the banquet hall in a great hurry and said to his father,—

"O father, there is a poor pilgrim from Rome sitting outside our gate, and he is so hungry, may I take him some of my birthday feast?"

The father was very pleased to think that his little son should care for the poor and wish to be kind, so he willingly gave his permission and told one of the servants to give the child all that he wanted.

Then, as the demon sat eating the good things, he began to question the boy and tried to find out all that he could about him.

"Do you often play in the garden?" he asked.

"Oh yes," said the child, "I play there whenever I may, for in the midst of the lawn there is a beautiful fountain, and the gardener makes me boats to sail on the water."

"Will he make you one to-day?" asked the demon quickly.

"He is not here to-day," answered the child, "for this is a holiday for every one and I am quite alone."

Then the demon rose to his feet slowly, and said he felt so much better after the good food that he thought he could walk a little, and would like very much to come in and see the beautiful garden and the fountain he had heard about.

So the child climbed up and with great difficulty drew back the bolts. The great gates swung open and the demon walked in.

As they went along together towards the fountain, the child held out his little hand to lead the pilgrim, but even the demon shrunk from touching anything so pure and innocent, and folded his arms under his robe, so that the child could only hold by a fold of his cloak.

"What strange kind of feet you have," said the child as they walked along; "they look as if they belonged to an animal."

"Yes, they are curious," said the demon, "but it is just the way they are made."

Then the child began to notice the demon's hands, which were even more curious than his feet, and just like the paws of a bear. But he was too courteous to say anything about them when he had already mentioned the feet.

Just then they came to the fountain, and with a sudden movement the demon threw back his hood and showed his dreadful face. And before the child could scream he was seized by those hairy hands and thrown into the water.

But just at that moment the gardener was returning to his work and saw from a distance what had happened. He ran as fast as he could, but he only got to the fountain in time to see the demon vanish, while the child's body was floating on the water. Very quickly he drew him out, and carried him, all dripping wet, up to the castle, where they tried to bring him back to life. But alas! it all seemed of no use, he neither moved nor breathed; and the day that had begun with such rejoicing ended in the bitterest woe. The poor parents were heart-broken, but they did not quite lose hope, and prayed earnestly to Saint Nicholas who had given them the child that he would restore their boy to them again.

As they prayed by the side of the little bed where the body of the child lay, they thought something moved, and to their joy and surprise the boy opened his eyes and sat up, and in a short time was as well as ever.

They asked him eagerly what had happened, and he told them all about the pilgrim with the queer feet and hands, who had gone with him to the fountain and had then thrown back his hood and shown his terrible face. After that he could remember nothing until he found himself in a beautiful garden, where the loveliest flowers grew. There were lilies like white stars, and roses far more beautiful than any he had ever seen in his own garden, and the leaves of the trees shone like silver and gold. It was all so beautiful that for a while he forgot about his home, and when he did remember and tried to find his way back he grew bewildered and did not know in what direction to turn. As he was looking about, an old man came down the garden path and smiled so kindly upon him that he trusted him at once. This old man was dressed in the robes of a bishop, and had a long white beard and the sweetest old face the child had ever seen.

"Art thou searching for the way home?" the old man asked. "Dost thou wish to leave this beautiful garden and go back to thy father and mother?"

"I want to go home," said the child, with a sob in his voice, "but I cannot find the way, and I am, oh, so tired of searching for it!"

Then the old man stooped down and lifted him in his arms, and the child laid his head on the old man's shoulder, and, weary with his wandering, fell fast

asleep and remembered nothing more till he woke up in his own little bed.

Then the parents knew that Saint Nicholas had heard their prayers and had gone to fetch the child from the Heavenly Garden and brought him back to them.

So they were more grateful to the good saint than ever, and they loved and honoured him even more than they had done before; which was all the reward the demon got for his wicked doings.

That is one of the many stories told after the death of Saint Nicholas, and it ever helped and comforted his people to think that, though they could no longer see him, he would love and protect them still.

Young maidens in need of help remembered the story of the golden bars and felt sure the good saint would not let them want. Sailors tossing on the stormy waves thought of that storm which had sunk to rest at the prayer of Saint Nicholas. Poor prisoners with no one to take their part were comforted by the thought of those other prisoners whom he had saved. And little children perhaps have remembered him most of all, for when the happy Christmas time draws near, who is so much in their thoughts as Saint Nicholas, or Santa Claus, as they call him? Perhaps they are a little inclined to think of him as some good magician who comes to fill their stockings with gifts, but they should never forget that he was the kind bishop who, in olden days, loved to make the little ones happy. There are some who think that even now he watches over and protects little children, and for that reason he is called their patron saint.

Mottoes for April

Do not be laughed into that which you know to be wrong.

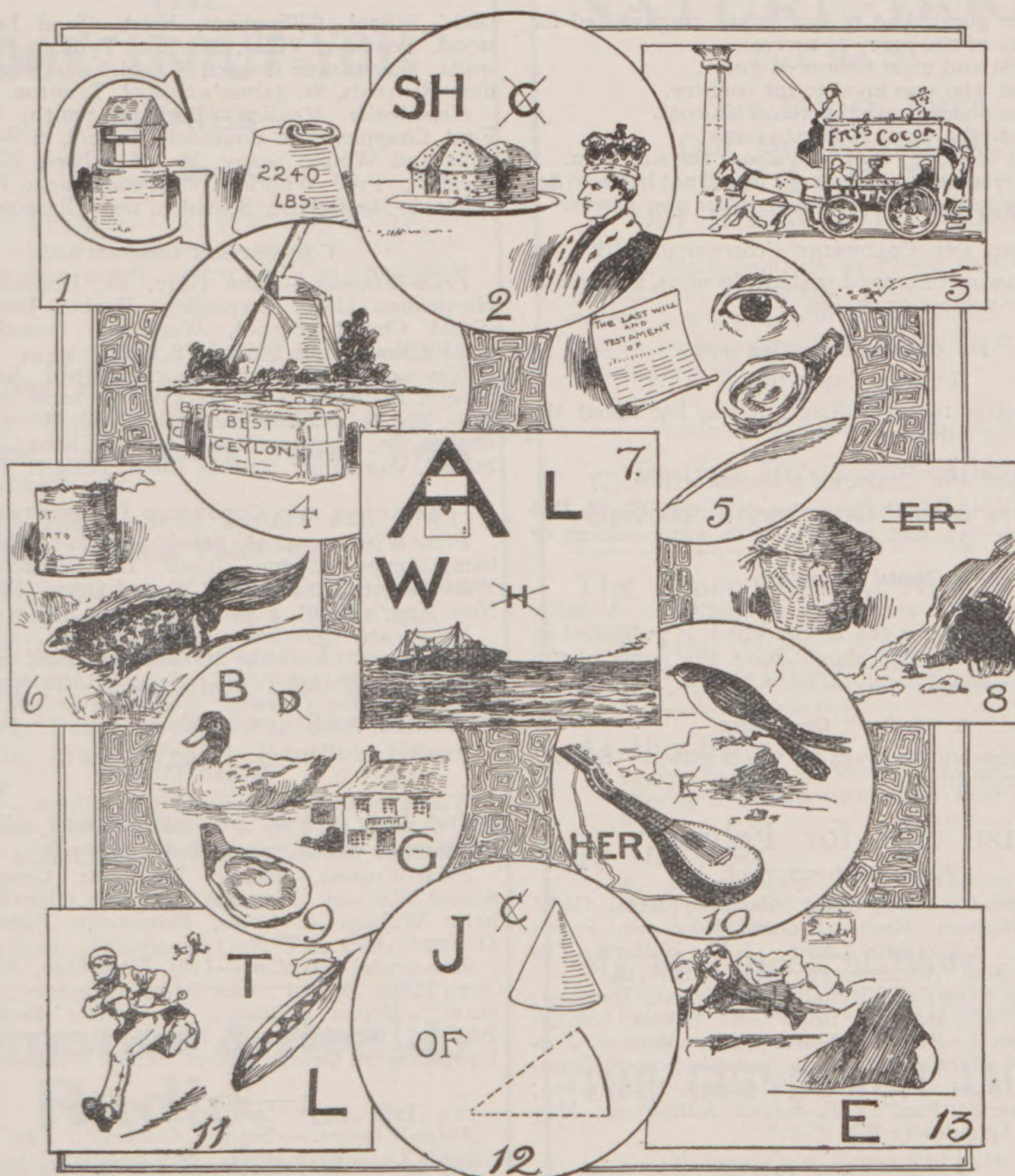
LORD BEACONSFIELD.

Sent in by MAURICE M'CLELLAND,
13 Linden Gardens, Cliftonville Road, Belfast,
to whom a book prize has been awarded.

If you wish success in life, make Perseverance your bosom friend, Experience your wise counsellor, Caution your elder brother, and Hope your guardian genius.

ADDISON.

Sent in by PHYLLIS DAVIES,
Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge,
to whom a book prize has been awarded.



HISTORICAL CHARACTERS.

Our Competitions

Competitions for April

For all Ages up to Fifteen

VERSE COMPETITION

Write not less than twelve lines of verse on "Spring Flowers."

HISTORICAL PUZZLE

The picture on this page represents thirteen historical characters. Can you find out who they are?

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (A)

Make a drawing of Mr. and Mrs. Smith and family spending a day at the seaside, and colour it with water-colours or chalks.

For Children under Twelve only

COMPOSITION COMPETITION

Suppose you dreamt that you were given Aladdin's lamp for one night. Describe your experiences.

PAT'S PARTY

Our friend Pat gave a party
Upon St. Patrick's Day.
But who was there and what they did
I'll leave you now to say.
If you would solve the puzzle
And all words quickly see,
Remember that each answer
Begins with P.A.T.

1. What led to Pat's door.
2. The guard who stood outside.
3. What Pat had just received on his latest invention.
4. His wealthy friend who had lent him the money for it.

5. What the guests had to have while they waited for the day of the party to arrive.
6. The oldest and most honoured guest.
7. The guest who was loyal to his country.
8. What the poorest guest wore on his coat.
9. The guest who was too sick to come.
10. The kind of stories they told about the sick man.
11. What they hoped the raindrops would not begin to do.
12. What the ladies used in making their new gowns.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (B)

Make a drawing of a pond with ducks on it, and colour it with water-colours or chalks.

For Children under Ten only

LETTER COMPETITION

Write a letter to the Editress telling her about the story you most enjoy.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (C)

Make a drawing of the completed Mother Goose Dot Puzzle on page 52, and colour it with water-colours or chalks.

Motto Competition

All readers may enter this competition. A Book Prize will be given for the motto which is published in the paper. Each motto should have the name of the author from whom the quotation is taken.

A "Smiles" Competition

A Book Prize will be given for the brightest "Smile" sent in this month.

Prize List for February

ESSAY COMPETITION

Prize-Winners.—Mary Dodd, Barnsole Road Girls' School, Gillingham, Kent. Richard Vose, St. Paul's C.E. School, Adlington, Lancs. John Fulford, The Southfield School, Wandsworth, London, S.W.18.

Honourable Mention.—Ronald Greenwood, Burnley; Kathleen Waters, Barnsole Road Girls' School, Gillingham; Doreen I. Buss, Midhurst; Lily Bryson, Fulham, S.W.4.; Mabel Hawker, St. James's School, Taunton; Doris Ross, St. Dominic's School, Harpenden; Robert Irving, St. Paul's C.E. School, Adlington; May E. Millican, Aghadowey.

ARITHMETICAL PUZZLE

[The answer to this problem was "PHLEGMATIC."]

Prize-Winners.—Jack Ekin, 24 Cedar Avenue, Antrim Road, Belfast. E. Adamson, 293 School Road, Crookes, Sheffield. Eliza Valentine, St. Paul's C.E. School, Adlington, Lancs.

Honourable Mention.—Tom Semple, Strabane; Eva Francis, Newtownards; Hannah Roberts, Widnes; Lily Coulter, Limavady, Co. Derry; William A. Cross, Banbridge, Co. Down; Robert Tarr, St. James's School, Taunton; Maggie Edmonstone, Worsthorne Council School, near Burnley; Eileen Gertrude Green, East Ham, E.6.; N. Shannahan, Milton Church Hall School, Portsmouth; William J. Ashford, The Southfield School, S.W.18.; Alfred Lawrence, St. George's Boys' School, Wallasey; Evelyn Smith, Graveney, near Faversham; Julia M'Ewan, Post Office Buildings, West Kilbride; Eileen M'Cormick, Southport.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (A)

Prize-Winners.—Gladys Marchant, Barnsole Road

Girls' School, Gillingham, Kent. Joan Lewis, Sherwood, Pentwyn Villas, Merthyr Tydfil. Jack Douthwaite, Worsthorne Council School, near Burnley. William Richards, St. James's School, Taunton.

Honourable Mention.—Barbara Smith, Dunstable; Fred Chapple, The Southfield School, S.W.18.; Sybil Ellis and Winnie Sexey, Mount School, Kersal, Manchester; Fred Whorlow, Graveney, near Faversham; Adelaide Macfarlane, Bearsden, near Glasgow.

COMPOSITION COMPETITION

Prize-Winners.—Edna Gray, St. Dominic's School, Harpenden Hall, Harpenden, Herts. Joan Thomas, Christ Church School, Worthing. Dorothy Hardy, 684 Fulham Road, Fulham, S.W.6.

Honourable Mention.—Maurice Broad, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton; Margaret E. Sams and Dorothy Ellis, The Southfield School, S.W.18.; Helen Patterson, Beragh, Co. Tyrone; Marjorie Kail, Christ Church Girls' School, Worthing; Sydney Elliot, Belfast.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (B)

Prize-Winners.—Zoë Ethel Stericker, Mayles, Cobham, Surrey. Sydney Boulton, The Southfield School, Wandsworth, London, S.W.18. Doris Pickett, 307 New King's Road, Fulham, London, S.W.6.

Honourable Mention.—James Dornan, Saintfield, Co. Down; Cyril Chelmick, St. George's Boys' School, Wallasey; Una Parker, York; Fred R. M'Cleery, Londonderry; Phyllis Creswell, New Cleethorpes, Grimsby; E. Howard, London, S.W.18.

ZIGZAG PUZZLE

[The solution of this puzzle is as follows:—Pine, tune, size, Graz (N.B., Görz is in Italy), MMLI, seat, seas, giving the two words *Puzzles* and *Enigmas*.]

Prize-Winners.—Harold Jones, St. George's Boys' School, Wallasey. Matthew Stevenson, Glenview, Chapelhall. William A. Cross, Brookfield, Banbridge, Co. Down.

Honourable Mention.—Lily Beveridge, Cleethorpes; Nora Hillis, Belfast; Alec Smith, Graveney, near Faversham; Megan Williams, Liverpool; Reggie Beach, Rubery, Birmingham; Ronald Harvey and Alfred Lawrence, St. George's Boys' School, Wallasey.

LETTER COMPETITION

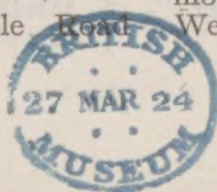
Prize-Winners.—Sidney Gilchrist, The Southfield School, London, S.W.18. Ivy Sanders, 130 Stamshaw Road, Portsmouth. May Taylor, Cavan Upper, Killygordon, Co. Donegal.

Honourable Mention.—Peggy Lander, Rubery, Birmingham; Evelyn Jiggins, Fulham, S.W.6.; Barbara Fox, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton; Harold Lord, St. George's Boys' School, Wallasey; Vincent Walkerley, St. Dominic's School, Harpenden, Herts; Myrtle Prowse, Barnsole Road Girls' School, Gillingham; Anne Lawson, Jordanhill, Glasgow; Bella Wilson, Warrington Road School, Widnes; Isa Pirie, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (C)

Prize-Winners.—Winnie Russell, Barnsole Road Girls' School, Gillingham, Kent. John Hadgkiss, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge. Jean Summerfield, The Colmer's Farm, Rubery, near Birmingham.

Honourable Mention.—Hilda White Jeffrey, Corstorphine; Tony Adam, Norfolk; Mary Grace Morgan, Bridgenorth, Salop; Phyllis Randall, Milton, Portsmouth; Joan Stevens, Rednal, Birmingham; Frederick Webster, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton.



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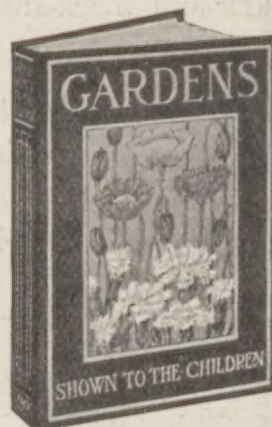
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[April

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